(6) Coupe sales should be stopped once for all. Timber should never be sold except from depots.

(7) Auction sales of timber in depots should be conducted only in Edavom and Mithunam, after meeting the demands of the Government departments and the people for timber.

(8) The property marks of the relations of the supplying contractors of the Forest Department should not be registered and such persons should not be permitted to carry on trade in timber. Property marks of timber merchants in towns alone should be registered.

(9) Better arrangements should be made for the capture of elephants and the collection of minor forest produce.

(10) The check-measurements of logs in depots should be made at least 10 days before the auction sale of the same.

(11) The export of timber should be prohibited till the present famine conditions disappeared.

Dewan's reply.—The representation of the Member will receive due consideration. The Member will do well to see the Conservator and explain to him in detail all that he said.

20. Desirability of dispensing with the present system of issuing free passes by the Forest Department for the removal of junglewood from registered lands.

Mr. K. Sankara Iyer (Member, Todupuzha taluk) submitted that the holders of registered lands had full rights of ownership on junglewood trees standing thereon, since they had paid for the same at the time of registry and that the restrictions placed on the removal of such trees over which they had complete control were not justifiable. On receipt of applications for the grant of free passes for the removal of such timber, the trees then found on the land were checked with the list of trees for which *thadivila* had been paid. If differences were observed, passes were not easily granted, though it had been clearly laid down in G. O. No. 2055 L. R., dated the 17th February 1914, that the registry-holder was not liable for such differences. It had also been ordered that, at the time of issuing free passes, Divisional Forest Officers need not ascertain the actual *thadivila* paid for at the time of registry of the lands. Government had been held liable for the loss incurred by the registry-holders on account of the delay in getting free passes (*Vide* 5 T. L. J. 153). The rules on the subject also required that passes should be issued within 15 days from the date of receipt in the Divisional Offices of the Forest Ranger's report on the application for passes. In spite of all the above clear orders of Government and the rulings of the High Court, passes were being issued according to the whims and fancies of the Divisional Forest Officers. The people were put to much hardship and loss thereby. Further, the insistence of the production of certificates from village officers and also of sketches of the lands mentioned in the application for passes caused immense hardship to the people and much unnecessary delay in the disposal of applications for passes. Thus, the obstacles in the way of getting free passes at the proper time were numerous and they contributed to enormous delays. The Member, therefore, requested that the system of granting free passes for the removal of junglewood logs from registered lands be done away with.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

21. Desirability of throwing open reserves for the extension of cultivation with a view to meet the increasing demand for paddy.

Mr. M. Thomman (Member, Peermade taluk) described the present economic distress brought on by war conditions and suggested that articles of food stuff required for the people of the State should be cultivated within the State itself. The action of the Government in getting down the necessary supplies from foreign places was really praiseworthy, but it was doubtful whether Government would be able to

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

continue such supplies for any unlimited period without giving room for complaints. Even if such a thing was feasible, the Member thought it advantageous to put a stop to it. He observed that, according to the Director of Agriculture, the cultivation of about 1,25,000 acres of land with paddy every year would yield the entire quantity of paddy required for the people of the State, while in G. O. No. L. R. 930, dated 8th February 1920, Government had resolved that 2,000 acres of land in the Devicolam Division, certain *kari* lands near the Thottapalli lock and portions of certain *kayals* should be made available for registry so as to enable people to raise paddy cultivation. That area was too small. There were still available areas in various taluks which were suitable for paddy cultivation. He suggested that—

(1) the portions of Reserved Forerts adjoining inhabited localities and suitable for paddy cultivation should be thrown open for cultivation and registered in the names of poor persons ;

(2) an area of not less than 10,000 acres from the Rani Reserved Forest lying to the north of the Azhutha River and comprised in Survey Nos. 379/1 C. 12, 385/1, 385/D and 384/5 ; and

(3) the lands comprised in Survey Nos. 379/1 C and 372/1 (excepting 1,300 acres proposed to be reserved) and 780/1 in the Kanjirapalli *pakuthi* should be registered in small blocks in the names of persons without allowing companies to take registry of the same in big blocks.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

(3) Salt.

22. Development of the manufacture of local salt and the creation of a separate department for the same.

Mr. M. Sivathanu Pillai (Member, Agastiswaram taluk) represented that the arrangements for the manufacture and sale of salt in the State were not satisfactory. Though the area fit for salt culture and sufficient to yield the quantity of salt required for consumption in the State was available, enough had not been done to increase the output of indigenous salt. The manufacturers of salt were not given adequate encouragement and inducements and they therefore showed great reluctance in taking up more areas for salt culture. The *alloms* that had been used for the manufacture of salt were not permitted to be utilised for the purpose. The Member pointed out that 400 *pans* in the Puthalam which had yielded about 10,000 *maunds* of salt per annum and 100 *pans* belonging to Avadhanikal which had been producing about 5,000 *maunds* of salt every year were allowed to lie idle. Want of equal treatment to all persons engaged in the manufacture of salt and also the existence of differences in the prices allowed to the salt produced by them accounted for the decrease in the production of local salt. The maintenance of the old *alloms* was not attended to and consequently many *alloms* had become useless. For the above reasons the revenue derived from the sale of local salt had decreased very much. The difficulties and cost of transport of foreign salt from Bombay and Tuticorin into the State had of late increased very much and resulted in an additional burden on the poor people. In some parts of the State salt was easily procurable, while in other parts the price was very high and the available salt was also not of good quality. Formerly, a bag of good salt weighing 2 *maunds* used to sell at a uniform rate of Rs. $3\frac{3}{4}$ throughout the State. At present the prices of foreign salt and local salt differed greatly. Even the people of the Trivandrum and Padmanabhapuram Divisions who purchased salt direct from the places of manufacture were made to pay transport charges. Such a procedure was really unjustifiable and appeared to be in contravention of the conditions laid down in the Interportal Trade Convention. On the other hand, it afforded ample facilities for certain salt contractors to make undue and illegal profit. The present manufacture of local salt was under the control of Departmental Officers and subordinates, who were ignorant of the work entrusted to them. The keen competition among the persons engaged in the manufacture of salt seriously hampered the production of local salt.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly